



Ramadhan

All praise is due to Allah تعالى, who is the Greatest in showing kindness to His servants. He has protected them from the deceit and cunning of Shayṭān, crushing his hopes and thwarting his plans. Allah تعالى has made fasting a protection and a shield for His close servants, and through it, he has opened for them the doors of Jannah.

Verily, the month of Ramadan is upon us. It is the month in which the Qur'an was revealed as guidance for mankind, with clear proofs of guidance and a criterion between right and wrong. Therefore, welcome it with eagerness and deep love.

Salmaan رضى الله عنه has narrated regarding the month of Ramadhan that Rasoolullah ﷺ addressed us on the last day of Sha'ban and said:

"O people! Verily, a great month has come upon you-a blessed month containing a night better than a thousand months. Allah تعالى has made fasting during it compulsory and has made standing in prayer at night a means of attaining His pleasure. Whoever draws close to Allah تعالى by performing a good deed in this month is like one who performs a fard outside of Ramadan, and whoever performs a fard in it is like one who has performed seventy faraa'id in other months."

Nabee ﷺ said:

"This is a month of patience, and the reward of patience is Jannah. It is a month of compassion and strengthening relationships. It is a month in which the sustenance of a believer is increased. Whoever provides ifṭār to a fasting person will have his sins forgiven and will be freed from the Fire of Jahannam, and he will receive a reward equal to that of the fasting person, without any decrease in the reward of the latter."

We then said,

"O Rasoolullah ﷺ, not all of us are able to feed a fasting person."

Rasoolullah ﷺ replied:

"Allah تعالى grants this reward even to the one who gives a fasting person a sip of milk, a date, or a drink of water to break his fast. And whoever feeds a fasting person until he is satisfied, Allah تعالى will grant him a drink from my Hawd-a drink after which he will never feel thirst until he enters Jannah."

How should our Ramadan be spent?

The first ten days are for seeking the mercy of Allah تعالى. The second ten days are for seeking the forgiveness of Allah تعالى. The final ten days are for seeking emancipation from the Fire of Jahannam.

Whoever eases the burden of his servant during this month, Allah تعالى will forgive him and free him from the Fire of Jahannam.

Benefits of fasting

All praise is due to Allah تعالى و سبحانه and may salutations be upon Rasulullah ﷺ. The real appreciation for all virtues in every aspect that the mercy unto the worlds, Rasulullah ﷺ, mentioned to the Muslims is, that we toil for them, However our shortcomings and indifferences towards Deen has increased on a daily basis, to such an extent, that practice upon them has become difficult. May Allah تعالى و سبحانه forgive us for this.

The blessed month of Ramadan is a great favour of Allah تعالى و سبحانه for the Muslims, but only if this favour appreciated, otherwise it will mean nothing to us and we will be deprived. But instead we will be chanting "Ramadan, Ramadan" for an entire month, uselessly – It is mentioned in one Hadith that the fast of Ramadan and fasting three days every month will remove the impurity and whispering from the heart.

In another narration it is mentioned that Allah تعالى و سبحانه commands the angels who hold the 'Arsh to leave their worship and to say "Aameen" to the du'as of those who are fasting during Ramadan.

It is narrated by Hazrat Abu 'Ubaydah رضى الله عنه that

Rasulullah ﷺ said: “Fasting is a shield until it is not pierced.” The meaning of shield is that fasting protects a person from his enemy, i.e. Shaytaan, just as a shield protects a person.

In one narration it is mentioned that a person asked, “O Rasulallah, what causes the fast to spoil?” He ﷺ replied: “Lies and backbiting.”

Rasulullah ﷺ once said: “There is a fixed principle for rewarding all the good deeds of men and every good deed will be rewarded according to it, but the fast is an exception. The standing command of Allah سبحانه و تعالى is that since a man forgoes food and drink and subdues his passion solely for His sake, He will recompense him directly for it.”

The Mashaaikh have mentioned six things to be part of the etiquettes of fasting that are necessary to be observed by the fasting person.

1. Protection of the gaze: It should not fall on anything impermissible, to such an extent that the gaze with lust should not be directed even at one’s wife.
2. Protection of the tongue: Lies, carrying tales, useless talk, backbiting, foul speech, swearing, arguing, etc.
3. Protection of the ears: It is not permissible to listen to any detestable things.
4. Protection of the limbs: The hands touching something impermissible, the feet walking towards something impermissible, and similarly with all other limbs.
5. Moderation at iftaar: A person should not eat a stomach full at the time of iftaar even with halal provision, because the purpose of fasting is lost and a full stomach creates laziness and lethargy, which acts negatively.
6. Fear of acceptance: After fasting, a person should fear whether his fast has been accepted or not. May Allah سبحانه و تعالى save us, for all this is a result of bad intentions.

A fasting person should, together with protecting his intention, remain fearful and continuously make du’a, that Allah سبحانه و تعالى makes it a means of His pleasure. A person should not assume his action to be accepted, but remain focused on the final decision and benevolence of the Great, Most Merciful Master.

Laylatul Qadr

In Islam, certain times and places are infused with special sanctity to encourage believers to seek closeness to Allah تعالى. While worship can occur at any time and in any place, there are uniquely blessed periods and locations that inspire feelings of awe, reverence, and longing among the faithful. Particularly today, amidst various dis-

tractions, these sacred times offer invaluable opportunities for spiritual transformation. One such significant period is the last ten nights of Ramadan. As narrated by Nabee’s ﷺ wife `A’isha, during these nights, Nabee ﷺ would remain awake in worship and prepare himself with greater vigor for prayer and devotion. He also recommended i’tikaf (seclusion in the mosque), emphasizing its spiritual benefits.

The pinnacle of these sacred nights is Laylatul-Qadr, or the Night of Decree. This night is so significant that the 97th chapter of the Qur'an is exclusively dedicated to it, describing it as "better than a thousand months" (Qur'an 97:3). Though the exact date of Laylatul-Qadr is unknown, Nabee ﷺ advised the faithful to seek it during the odd nights of the last ten days of Ramadan. This uncertainty encourages believers to maintain constant devotion and worship throughout this period.

‘Qadr’ in Laylatul-Qadr carries multiple meanings, each reflecting various theological significances. One interpretation is destiny, indicating that on this night, Allah تعالى determines the forthcoming year’s fate, including crucial aspects like sustenance and lifespan. Notably, scholars like Ibn Abbas, Al-Hasan Al-Basri, and Imam Al-Nawawi have endorsed this view. Another interpretation suggests that 'Qadr' means power, emphasizing the extraordinary spiritual potency of actions performed on this night. As Ibn ‘Uthaymeen noted, while knowing the specific night is not necessary, earnest worship alone suffices to reap its rewards.

Additionally, 'Qadr' can imply restriction, signifying the earth's saturation with descending angels on this sacred night. Angelic descent symbolizes divine blessings, as angels, typically dwelling close to Allah تعالى, descend to signify the night's majesty. Nabee ﷺ described the angels on Laylatul-Qadr as "numerous as the pebbles upon the earth,” highlighting its enormous spiritual magnitude. Laylatul-Qadr is also regarded as a divine gift to the Muslim community, offering immense spiritual rewards even within human lifespan limitations.

Laylatul-Qadr has a profound connection with the Qur'an. As mentioned in Surah al-Qadr and Surah al-Dukhan, the Qur'an was revealed on this night. Ibn Abbas explained that the Qur'an was sent down in its entirety from the highest heaven to the lowest heaven and placed in a special chamber called Bayt al-`Izzah (the House of Honor), before being gradually revealed to Nabee ﷺ. This marked the commencement of divine revelation and elevated its significance.

Why is Laylatul-Qadr the greatest night for worship?

It is the night when angels descend with decrees for the forthcoming year, making it extraordinarily significant for supplication and prayer. As believers reflect on potential future events, the momentous possibility of altering their destiny through sincere supplication becomes clear. Nabee ﷺ advised invoking Allah's attribute of forgiveness (al-Afuww) on this night, seeking divine pardon to erase sins and their resultant decrees. As the Qur'an states, calamities befall due to human actions, but Allah pardons a significant amount (Qur'an 42:30). Therefore, invoking al-Afuww can remove the consequences of past misdeeds and alter one's fate.

To derive the maximum benefit from Laylatul-Qadr, one should avoid wasting time and engage in acts of worship, starting from Maghrib. Simple acts like praying Isha and Fajr in congregation can ensure participation in the night's blessings. Extra voluntary prayers further enrich the experience. Nabee ﷺ emphasized that sincere devotion during this night leads to forgiveness of all past sins.

Another critical aspect is mutual forgiveness among people. Nabee's ﷺ knowledge of the specific night was lifted due to a dispute between individuals, teaching that internal strife obstructs divine forgiveness. By letting go of grudges, believers can fully embrace Allah's تعالى mercy.

In summary, Laylatul-Qadr exemplifies Allah's تعالى infinite mercy through limited human effort. This profound night annually honors Nabee ﷺ ummah by sending Jibrael عليه السلام and reflecting divine blessings through sincere worship. The night intertwines destiny and spiritual power, urging believers to seek Allah's تعالى pardon and maximize the precious time in worship. As a divine call to intensified devotion and seeking forgiveness, Laylatul-Qadr remains a central pillar of spiritual elevation in Islam.

Virtues of I'tikaaf

The act of secluding oneself in the Masjid with the sincere intention of worshipping Allah تعالى is one of the most beautiful and spiritually uplifting voluntary acts of worship prescribed in Islam. It is a practice in which the believer leaves worldly distractions behind to devote time exclusively to Allah تعالى, to seek His pleasure, and to purify the heart.

1) The Qur'an makes a clear command regarding those who devote themselves in the Masjid with devotion:

وَأَتِمُّوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَاعْتَصِمُوا فِي الْمَسَاجِدِ

"And complete the prayers and give zakāh and remain in devotion in the mosques."

This verse underscores the connection between prayer, purification, and I'tikaaf, that those who seek true closeness to Allah تعالى should attach themselves to His houses of worship, removing the distractions of the world.

2) A Practice of Nabee ﷺ

Nabee ﷺ made I'tikāf a Sunnah mu'akkadah (an emphasized Sunnah), especially in the last ten nights of Ramadan. 'A'ishah رضى الله عنها reported:

"Nabee ﷺ used to perform I'tikaaf in the last ten nights of Ramadan until Allah تعالى took him.

(Sahīh Al-Bukhārī)

This practice underlines the importance of seeking the Night of Power (Laylatul Qadr), which is better than a thousand months, a night most likely found in the last ten nights of Ramadan.

3) Drawing Near to Allah تعالى, leaving sins behind:

One of the beautiful dimensions of I'tikaaf is that it creates an environment where the heart turns fully to Allah تعالى. A narration attributed to Ibn 'Abbās رضى الله عنه states that Nabee ﷺ said regarding the one who sits in I'tikaaf:

"He refrains from sin and is rewarded as though he does all good deeds."

(Sunan Ibn Mājah)

What this highlights:

Even though the exact wording is not of the highest classification in hadeeth sources, it is a spiritually powerful truth: by dedicating oneself exclusively to worship and remembrance, the believer distances his heart from sin, creating space for sincere devotion and spiritual transformation.

4) Forgiveness, Protection, and Reward

Other narrations reported in the literature — though their chains are considered weak by scholars of Hadith — reflect the deep spiritual impact of I'tikāf:

A report states that Allah تعالى will place three wide trenches between a believer who does I'tikaaf and the Fire, signifying protection from Hellfire.

Another narration mentions that whoever performs I'tikaaf with faith and hope in reward will have previous sins forgiven.

It is also narrated that completing the ten days of I'tikaaf in Ramadan is like performing two Hajj and two 'Umrah.

Scholars often remind us of the caution needed in using weak reports, but the thematic spiritual reality remains: I'tikaaf is a means of drawing near to Allah تعالى, a purification of the heart, and a way to earn immense reward.

5) The Essence: Heart over Habit

Shaykh ul Hadith Muhammad Zakariyya رحمه الله used to emphasize — as do many of the great scholars — that I'tikaaf is not mere physical seclusion, but a spiritual commitment:

- 1. To withdraw from worldly distractions,
- 2. To increase in prayer, Qur'ān, and remembrance (dhikr),
- 3. To reflect deeply on one's relationship with Allah تعالى and one's sins, hopes, and aspirations.

He would remind students that I'tikaaf means to become like a guest of Allah's تعالى in His House, immersing oneself in dhikr, du'ā', and contemplation, seeking to return healthier in faith than when one entered.

Conclusion

I'tikaaf is a beautiful, voluntary act of worship that brings a believer closer to Allah تعالى. It purifies the heart, strengthens one's connection to the Qur'ān and Sunnah, and offers a chance for reflection and regeneration of the soul. During the blessed last ten nights of Ramadan, when the doors of mercy and forgiveness are wide open, I'tikaaf stands as one of the most beloved acts a Muslim can perform. May Allah تعالى grant us the ability to benefit from it with sincerity and acceptance.

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al reflection, self-improvement, and community building. One of the most emphasized virtues during this period is generosity, a quality that holds immense value in Islam.

As Nabee ﷺ said:

"The best of people are those who are most beneficial to people".

The Significance of Generosity in Ramadan

Generosity is considered a fundamental aspect of a Muslim's faith, and Ramadan is an ideal time to cultivate this trait.

The Quran and Hadith highlight the importance of giving and kindness, encouraging Muslims to be more generous and charitable during this month. Allah تعالى says:

"Who is it that would lend to Allah تعالى a generous loan so He may multiply it for him many times over?"

(Quran 57:11)

Benefits of Generosity in Ramadan

- 1. Increased Blessings:** Giving generously in Ramadan is believed to multiply one's rewards and blessings, both in this life and the hereafter.
- 2. Spiritual Growth:** Generosity helps to purify the soul, fostering a sense of empathy and compassion for those in need.
- 3. Community Building:** Ramadan is a time for community and unity; generosity helps strengthen bonds and promotes a sense of belonging.
- 4. Breaking Barriers:** Generosity transcends social and economic boundaries, bringing people together and fostering a sense of equality.

Ways to Practice Generosity in Ramadan

- 1. Zakat and Sadaqah:** Give to those in need, whether through Zakat or voluntary sadaqah.
- 2. Feed the Needy:** Provide meals for the less fortunate, either individually or through community initiatives.
- 3. Volunteer:** Offer time and effort to help others, whether at a local mosque, charity, or community center.
- 4. Share Knowledge:** Share Islamic knowledge, experiences, and skills with others, especially those new to the faith.
- 5. Forgiveness and Kindness:** Practice forgiveness and kindness towards others, even if they've wronged you.

The Impact of Generosity on the Ummah

Generosity has a profound impact on the Muslim com-

Generosity in Ramadhan

Ramadan, the holy month of fasting, is a time for spiritu-

munity, fostering a sense of unity and cooperation. When individuals give generously, they contribute to the well-being of others, creating a ripple effect of kindness and compassion. This, in turn, strengthens the bonds of brotherhood and sisterhood within the community.

Overcoming Barriers to Generosity

Despite its importance, generosity can be challenging, especially when faced with financial constraints or personal struggles. However, Islam teaches that even small acts of kindness count, and every effort is valued. Start with small gestures, such as giving a smile or offering a kind word, and gradually increasing your generosity as you become more comfortable.

Generosity Beyond Ramadan

While Ramadan is a prime time for generosity, it is essential to continue practicing this virtue throughout the year. Make generosity a habit by incorporating it into your daily life, whether through regular charity, volunteering, or simply being kind to those around you.

Cultivating a Culture of Generosity

To foster a culture of generosity, communities can organize events and initiatives that promote giving and kindness. This can include food drives, charity auctions, and volunteer days. By working together, Muslims can create a supportive environment that encourages generosity and compassion.

Conclusion

Generosity is a vital part of Ramadan, allowing Muslims to cultivate compassion, empathy, and spiritual growth. By embracing generosity, individuals can enhance their Ramadan experience and contribute to a more caring community. As the saying goes,

"The best charity is that given in Ramadan".

Productive tips for a spiritually successful Ramadhan

All praise belongs to Allah ﷻ, who grants us the month of Ramadhan as a time for reflection, self-discipline, and spiritual renewal. It is a period in which sincere effort is multiplied and hearts are guided toward righteousness. Ramadhan should be spent with purpose and awareness,

making the most of each day through mindful worship and upright conduct.

How to Make Ramadan productive?

1. Be consistent in worship:

Give priority to your daily prayers and approach them with calmness and sincerity.

2. Build a daily routine of remembrance:

Set time aside for recitation of the Qur'an, reflection, and self supplication.

3. Refine your character:

Show restraint in speech and behavior, respond with patience, and treat others with dignity and kindness.

4. Use time wisely: Reduce unnecessary activities and focus on what benefits your faith and personal growth.

5. Be generous and considerate: Support those in need, share your provisions, and look for ways to ease the difficulties of others.

6. Value the nights of Ramadan: Use the evenings for prayer and reflection, especially as the month draws to a close.

Ramadan is a chance for lasting change. Whoever strives sincerely during this month leaves it with a stronger heart and renewed purpose.

May Allah Ta'ala grant us sincerity, acceptance, and guidance throughout Ramadan.

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Inside This Issue:	
Ramadhan	Hamza Bhoja
Benefits of fasting	Ridhwan Jamalsah
Laylatul Qadr	Muhammad Nizamuddin
Virtues of I'tikaaf	Idrees
Generosity in Ramadhan	Nabil Essop
Productive tips for a spiritually successful Ramadhan	Tamim